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ABSTRACT

The impact of the changing macroecological characteristics of cities on school performance is explored, and what can be done to reduce the achievement shortcomings among urban students from ethnic and language minority backgrounds is considered. The increase in residential segregation and thereby educational segregation in urban schools is as much an economic as a social response to the decentralization of cities and the changing urban economic order. These changes, taken together, translate into a marked achievement gap between urban schools and the national norms. School success can be promoted by fostering resilience among urban youth. Two major guidelines derived from research and experience have received increasing attention for potentially reducing the risk factors associated with urban life. One is forging greater school connections with families and the community to support resilience development and student learning. The other is reducing educational segregation within the schools and implementing responsive and powerful instructional practices to ensure the learning success of every student. Specific strategies are presented to make the public schools inclusive and integrated. (Contains 48 references.) (SLD)

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Paper presented at "Voices of the City: Teaching and Learning in the Urban Context," an invitational conference sponsored by the Urban Education National Network of the Regional Educational Laboratories, May 5, 1995, Washington, DC.

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 # 95-9

Bridging The Achievement Gap In Urban Schools: Reducing Educational Segregation And Advancing Resilience-Promoting Strategies

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The Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision made equal access to public education the law of the land. With each decade we have increased the proportion of the population in school, included children from more diverse sociocultural and economic backgrounds in our schools, and diversified the kinds of educational programs we offer. Indeed, by stressing the value of education and its potential as a tool for social and economic equality, we have made enormous progress in ensuring equal access to a free public education for all children and youth in this country.

But these accomplishments have fallen far short of the educational vision of a universal school system that provides all children with equal access to success in school. Much of the school desegregation activity of the past three decades has been motivated by a desire to end the segregation of students from ethnic and language minority backgrounds. To date, these efforts have produced very little change to enhance social and academic integration (Bartelt, 1994a; Yancey & Saporito, in press). Furthermore, the focus on the "setting" of schooling has become a major barrier to the nation's quest to improve schooling for the very students who are the intended beneficiaries of school desegregation (Lipsky & Gartner, 1989; Wang & Reynolds, 1995).

There is little argument about the need to improve our capacity to provide for healthy development and educational success of all of this nation's children and youth, including and particularly minority students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who live in some of the most adverse inner-city situations. School has been and should continue to be the primary focus in attempts to find ways to improve our capacity to provide for healthy development and educational success of all of this nation's children and youth. For surely other efforts will come to naught if we fail to offer powerful forms of education in schools. However, significant learning occurs outside the schools, and the conditions for learning in schools are greatly influenced by the family and all elements of the community.

Despite the difficulties of urban life, cities also contain many rich and promising resources for children and families. Much is known from research and practical applications of innovative practices that can be culled to overcome adversities (Wang & Gordon, 1994). If only we can find the means of magnifying the "positives" in urban life, we can rekindle hope for improving our capacity for education in urban communities. The purpose of this paper is twofold: (a) to examine the impact of the changing macroecological characteristics of cities on school performance, and (b)

to cull from the research base and innovative developments on what can be done to make a significant difference in reducing the achievement gap among urban students from ethnic and language minority backgrounds.

Inner Cities in Decline: A Macroecological Perspective

There is increasing recognition that the achievement gap in this nation's urban schools may be better understood in terms of the decentralization of cities, the resulting changes in the social ecology of neighborhoods, and the structure of the urban labor market (Massey & Denton, 1993). The contention is that the changing makeup of the cities accounts for much of the failure of urban schools. The socioeconomic contexts of schooling--such as differences in ethnicity, socioeconomic class, family and community resources (both social and economic), and patterns of residential and educational segregation--play important roles in differences in educational attainment (Bartelt, 1994a; Kantor & Brenzel, 1993).

The Census data from the 1990s showed that the United States leads the industrialized world in numbers of children living in poverty. This is reflected in such legislation as the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, and the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Accompanying the decline of the manufacturing base of the U.S. economy and the economic restructuring of the cities, there has been an unprecedented increase in the numbers of children and families living in segregated and often highly adverse circumstances that place them at risk of school failure (Bartelt, 1994a; Children's Defense Fund, 1992; National Commission on Children, 1991). There is an increasing national recognition of the plight of children and families in a variety of high-risk circumstances and of their need for interventions that are effective in fostering educational resilience and learning success.

Paradoxically, the problem of residential segregation by race and social class has actually grown worse despite efforts following the civil rights legislation of the late 1960s (Massey & Denton, 1993). The current conditions largely can be traced to two separate but related processes. First, and most noticeably, the city of the late 20th century is decentralized. Whatever one calls the modern phenomenon -- sprawl, edge city, megalopolis, or the malling of America -- the Dickensian world of the 19th century, with its overcrowding, narrow streets, and noisy city tenements is largely a thing of the past. Secondly, the nature of the economic activity that undergirds urban life has changed dramatically. The urban explosion of the late 19th and early 20th century was fueled by factories and railroads, and by immigrants looking for work. Mass education in that era taught work discipline, common language, and rudimentary mathematical skills (Katz, 1971). In the late 20th century the American economy has changed to a service sector economy (Noyelle & Stanbeck, 1984) and expectations have grown regarding the nature of job skills within, at least, the upper-level service occupations (e.g., medical, legal, management, etc.).

The movement of resources, jobs, and people from central city to suburb has created a hostile environment for children and families and institutions embedded in the cities, including schools. In an analysis of the relationship between microsocial forces and educational accomplishment in the macroecology of 53 major cities across the country, Bartelt (1994b) noted that "... inner-city schools are increasingly the schools of remnant populations and communities trapped by their

economic irrelevance or their links to diminished labor markets. [They] are increasingly dependent on an overloaded and endangered fiscal base" (p. 2).

The increase in residential segregation and thereby educational segregation in urban schools is as much an economic as a social response to the decentralization of cities and the changing urban economic order. These changes, taken together, translate into a marked achievement gap between urban schools and the national norms. Indeed, the mean reading score of a school's students can be predicted by the aggregated rates of childhood poverty and the various epidemiological problems. The more a school draws from poor neighborhoods riddled with social problems, the worse its students perform academically. Yancey and Saporito (1994) found that children from inner-city neighborhoods are more likely to contract everything from measles to tuberculosis to lead poisoning. As poverty rises, both children and young adults are more likely to be crime victims, to receive inadequate health care, and to suffer from a variety of physical, psychological, and social traumas. These circumstances place children at risk of educational failure and, by necessity, place schools at the center of interconnected social problems.

The Contemporary Context of Educational Segregation

Despite legislative mandates and progress in achieving school integration that transcends neighborhood boundaries, educational segregation -- or "resegregation" within integrated schools -- remains rampant and maintains a status quo that continues to contribute to the achievement gap (Wang, 1986). The situation has not improved since the publication of Coleman's (1966) findings on the lack of progress on desegregation in the decade following the *Brown* decision. Schools are still largely segregated today. In 1968, for example, 76% of African-American students and 55% of Latino students attended predominately minority schools. In 1991, these statistics had improved only slightly for African Americans and had grown worse for Latinos; 66% of all African Americans and 74.3% of Latinos were still in segregated schools (Celis, 1993). In states such as Illinois, Michigan, New York, and New Jersey, more than 50% of the schools are 90 to 100% minority.

The negative impact of residential segregation -- both on the composition of the school population and the quality of education--continues to raise pressing concerns in the educational community and the public. A primary problem associated with residential segregation is the prevalence of the achievement gap. African-American and other minority students tend to be in schools where overall achievement is low (Bartelt, 1994a). In a January 1995 opinion (*Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission v. School District of Philadelphia*), Judge Doris Smith decreed that the School District of Philadelphia must "end the School District's 24 years of stonewalling and claims of fiscal inability to educate the racially isolated school students, and to . . . finally satisfy its legal obligation to those children" (p. 12). She argued that measures can be enacted in segregated systems that will move the schools toward educational equity, including elimination of prolonged disruption in learning at the beginning of each school year; reduction of school leveling and providing textbooks and other necessary supplies at each school; assigning qualified substitutes in racially isolated schools; and development of incentives to attract more experienced teachers to those schools. In essence, the decree does not require increased integration of schools, but does command equity in educational outcomes.

Efforts directed toward achieving racial integration in schools, although well intentioned, have created even greater segregation for a large number of students in urban schools. According to Yancey and Saporito (1994), the magnet school and choice busing strategies have actually resulted in greater homogeneity in racial and SES makeup in neighborhood schools. Moreover, even in schools that have achieved racial integration, students from ethnic and language minority backgrounds often are resegregated by a variety of pullout remedial or compensatory education programs (Heller, Holtzman, & Messick, 1982). These categorical programs, generally created to serve targeted populations with identified problems, are governed by separate funding streams and eligibility criteria; their implementation tends to result in added layers of bureaucracy and disjointed implementation, and further segregation for large numbers of children from ethnic and language minority backgrounds (Heller et al., 1982; Lipsky & Gartner, 1989; National Association of State Boards, 1992).

The school reassignment approach to school desegregation often obscures the multiple ways by which children can be segregated socially and academically in school. Minority students frequently are reassigned to integrated schools but then resegregated by their placement in "special" programs. Here we refer to a somewhat different form of segregation -- educational segregation via the so-called second system programs (e.g., Chapter 1, Title I, and special education programs) initiated to respond to the diversity of student needs. A special commission appointed to investigate the problem of overrepresentation of minority students in special education found that African-American students are two to three times more likely than whites to be labeled retarded or behaviorally disturbed (Heller et al., 1982).

Once assigned to pullout programs, children's learning problems may actually increase. Substantial evidence shows that students receive inferior instruction when they are placed in specially designed programs, thereby placing them further at risk of educational failure. In many cases, selecting and tracking students for instruction in special programs are based on certain perceived student differences, involving delivery of radically different and not always appropriate content (Allington & Johnston, 1989; Oakes, 1985). In general, there is a tendency to underestimate what students placed in special programs can do, to neglect fundamental content, to provide less instruction focusing on higher order thinking and advanced skills, to delay the introduction of more challenging work, and to not provide students with a motivating context for learning (Means & Knapp, 1991).

Rights to Schooling Success: A Civil Rights Issue of the 1990s

To counter these trends and reduce the achievement gap requires both an inclusive approach to responding to student diversity and provision of powerful instruction that will lead to educational success for *all* students (Commission on Chapter 1, 1992; Pugach, 1995; Renzulli, 1995). The overall problem of school integration should remain on the agenda, but providing quality education must be the central civil rights issue of today. If real progress is to be realized in achieving the rights of schooling success for all children and youth, educational improvement efforts must address whether equal opportunity for education leads to equity in educational outcomes. Providing "opportunities" for education without being accountable for educational outcomes simply perpetuates in a more subtle form the injustices that the *Brown* decision attempted to rectify.

Undoing these injustices will require a major redefinition of educational equity. The way we think about differences among students, how we view the purposes of elementary and secondary education, the way we choose to organize schools, and the forging of school connections with families and communities are all fundamental to the principle that standards of educational outcomes must be upheld for every student. The challenge is in identifying practices that deny, and those that promote, the right to schooling success.

Achieving Schooling Success through Resilience Development

Nowhere are the problems and needs of children as great as in inner cities. Inner cities are like backwater regions, left behind and isolated from an emerging global economy. The widespread problem of academic failure in urban schools, which could cripple the next generation, is sometimes overshadowed by the litany of troubles that blot the urban landscape. But this view of urban American is just half of the picture. Cities also contain many rich and promising resources for children and families. Despite the difficulties of life, many children and youth do (and can be nurtured to) mature into healthy adults. One thing is certain: human development and education must be key considerations in the rebuilding process.

Much is known from the research and practical application of innovative practices that can be culled in overcoming adversities and in strengthening the resources and protective mechanisms to foster healthy development and educational resilience of children and youth in a variety of adverse situations that place them at risk of school failure (Wang & Gordon, 1994; Wang & Reynolds, 1995). Children who grow into competent, well-educated adults have a chance to rise above the problems of adverse life circumstances. If only we can find the means of magnifying the "positives" in the lives of urban children and youth, we can rekindle hope for progress in addressing the deep-rooted problem of the achievement gap.

Schools are part of a larger system; they are ecologically embedded institutions that confront on a daily basis the problems of their surrounding communities, as well as those of national and multinational institutions--even though the school itself is localized in its point of delivery. It is not possible to achieve significant school improvement without forging working connections with multiple forces that influence the development of children or the social ecology of neighborhoods. The capability of the schools can be greatly enhanced when insights and expertise are drawn from many disciplines and professions, and when family and community resources are harnessed to forge a coordinated approach to fostering resilience development and learning success.

Fostering Educational Resilience: A Strategy for Reducing the Achievement Gap

Resilience, which originated as a construct in developmental psychopathology (Garmezy, 1974), has received much attention as an integrative framework for identifying and understanding individual and institutional resources that can be cultivated and mobilized to moderate the effects of individual vulnerability or environmental hazards. Perhaps more than any group, children and youth in urban schools are shouldering the burden of the numerous modern morbidities that continue to plague urban life, including the enormous demographic and economic transformation;

the resulting upswing of poverty, unemployment, and residential and educational segregation; the disjointed pattern of service delivery; and ineffective schools.

Broadly conceived in the context of achieving learning success, resilience is a construct that not only can be applied to individual and family situations, but also within institutions such as communities and the schools that serve them (Wang & Gordon, 1994). Resilience development, when applied in the context of schooling, is understood in terms of the complex interrelationships that characterize the development and functioning of the resilient individual and the protective mechanisms (family, school, and community) that foster such patterns of resilience. Much discussion among educators has centered on the search for resilience-promoting strategies or protective mechanisms that magnify the circumstances within which the burden of adversity is reduced and opportunities are advanced for learning. Two major guidelines, emerging from the past three decades of research and innovative development efforts, have received increasing recognition for potentially reducing the risk factors associated with the urban life and the achievement gap in urban schools: (a) forging greater school connections with families and the community to support resilience development and student learning; and (b) reducing educational segregation within schools and implementing responsive and powerful instructional practices to ensure learning success of every student. The research base and policy and practical implications for implementing these guidelines are briefly discussed in the next section.

Forging School Connections with Families and Communities

The educational reforms of the 1990s have been marked by the urgency of addressing the increasingly dire circumstances surrounding this nation's children. Families, particularly those from ethnic and language minority backgrounds who live in poverty, are beset by life-threatening problems that place their children at risk of educational failure. Public and private community agencies provide services such as counseling, financial assistance, or medical treatment to overcome the co-occurring problems or risks, but service delivery tends to be carried out in an isolated fashion. Schools are part of this disconnected nonsystem (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1989; Levy & Copple, 1989; Schorr & Schorr, 1988). There is a growing public demand for a coordinated and inclusive approach to service delivery (Center for the Future of Children, 1992; Tyack, 1992; Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, in press).

Students facing many adversities benefit from increased access to the range of services provided in collaborative arrangements. There is increasing recognition that the learning problems of children and families cannot be tackled by schools alone, and that broader social policies must be established to initiate interagency, collaborative programs that link schools and other service agencies. How educators and people in various organizations can enhance one another's efforts to ensure physical and psychological well-being and learning success of children and youth has become the central systemic school reform agenda of the 1990s (Kirst & Kelley, in press; Wang & Reynolds, 1995). This focus is clearly reflected in special reports (e.g. Commission on Chapter 1, 1992; Committee for Economic Development, 1994), in recently enacted legislation (e.g., Goals 2000: Educate America Act and the Improving America's Schools Act), and by the research base from varied disciplines (Flaxman & Passow, in press; Rigsby, Reynolds, & Wang, in press).

A variety of innovative strategies/programs that are effective in forging coordinated, comprehensive education and related human services delivery are being created across the country (Center for the Future of Children, 1992; Council of Chief State School Officers, 1989; Wang et al., 1994, in press; U.S. Department of Education, in press). Although they vary in their approaches and in the specifics of their program designs, these strategies share several common premises. One is that the problems facing children and families stem from a variety of cultural, economic, political, and health problems. Their solutions are by nature complex, and require the pooling of resources from public and private sector agencies such as city and state health and human services departments, businesses, religious institutions, and community-based social and medical service agencies. They also require negotiation of new forms of cooperation and coordination and new ways of mobilizing the energies and resources of the community.

A second premise is that narrowly conceived plans and commitments that focus only on schools will not solve the growing problems that must be addressed to ensure learning success of the many children and youth who have not fared well under the current system of service delivery. The challenge is to understand thoroughly the problems and resources that can be drawn upon to help raise consciousness about the opportunities in the community, especially among those who are in a position to shape policies; and to provide resources to improve the prospects of learning success for children and youth in at-risk situations.

A third premise is that school-linked coordinated, comprehensive services for children and families can meet the diverse needs of students especially well. Collaboratives often address multiple problems of clients who are frequently in communities that are educationally, economically, and socially marginalized. They are poised to provide learning environments that support learning success through focusing on meeting the physical and social wellness needs of students, providing role models and new information skills, and linking with the multiple resilience-enhancing resources of the community.

The following is a sample list of effective features of school-linked comprehensive, coordinated child and family services, drawn from findings of a comprehensive review of the research base (Wang et al., in press, 1994):

- The needs of students in at-risk circumstances are best addressed by collaborative programs that are prevention oriented, serve multiple needs, and target the client's family for intervention.

- The use of case management preserves an orientation toward serving the needs of the whole child, and reduces the fragmentation of service delivery.

- An ample planning period during which the perspectives of all stakeholders can be taken into account is essential to the healthy development of the collaborative. During this planning time, written agreements describing new roles, responsibilities, and procedures can be developed to guide the collaborative's operation. The use of needs assessment can be a helpful planning tool.

- Resolving issues of client and family confidentiality facilitates information sharing by collaborative staff.

- The provision of adequate resources (dollars, time, space, professional expertise, enthusiasm) is essential to program operation.

- The establishment of shared decision-making and management procedures contributes to a sense of equal partnership among school and agency personnel. Concerns such as establishing common eligibility criteria and common outcomes for evaluative purposes must be addressed.

- Well-crafted technical assistance should be provided to collaborative staff. Potential topics include increased communication and collegiality; goals clarification; cultural, ethnic, and linguistic sensitivity; client confidentiality; service providers sharing information that can enhance teachers' instruction and classroom management; and new roles and responsibilities for participating in the collaborative.

- The location of services is a central issue in the effectiveness of collaboratives. Co-location of services reduces fragmentation of service delivery and enhances the likelihood that clients will receive the array of services needed. Collaborative programs that provide co-location of services can respond efficiently to the needs of populations beset by multiple academic, medical, and mental health problems.

- The evolving role of school personnel in collaborative school-linked services challenges existing school structures. Teachers' involvement in referrals and case management procedures needs to be defined. Feedback from service providers to teachers could be used to tailor instruction and classroom management techniques to meet the needs of troubled students. The roles of teachers and school personnel in collaboratives could be further expanded to better meet the demands of students and families in at-risk circumstances.

- Serving families, including the needs of individual parents, is believed to be essential to the success of collaborative school-linked services. A range of medical, mental health, legal, and social services are being provided to students and families. Rarely are basic needs, such as food, shelter, and transportation, as well as emergency services, made available to clients.

- Financing a collaborative requires access to stable funding streams that are not susceptible to the vagaries of year-to-year state funds or limited research funds. Collaboratives need to access current monies set aside for children and family services.

- A variety of outcome measures should be employed in evaluations of collaborative school-linked services. Outcome measures should represent the goals of not only the schools, but all the participating agencies. Family-based outcomes should be collected. Student achievement scores, attendance data, and dropout rates can be used for comparisons in multisite program evaluations, but additional outcomes should be collected. Direct measures of collaboration,

numbers and kinds of services provided, unobtrusive measures, and client satisfaction can provide additional information on the collaborative's success.

Inclusion as a Strategy to Reduce Within-School Segregation and the Achievement Gap

Inclusion or integration of children with special needs in regular school learning environments has received increasing support as a systemic educational improvement strategy (Commission on Chapter 1, 1992; McDonnell & Hill, 1993; National Association of State Boards, 1992; Reynolds, 1991; U.S. Department of Education, 1994; Will, 1986). As schools are challenged to effectively serve an increasingly diverse student population, the central improvement question is not whether to provide an inclusive system of education and related service delivery, but *how to implement* such a system in ways that are both feasible and effective in ensuring schooling success for all children, including and especially those with special needs--students in need of "supplemental" and or "special" education and related support services.

Efforts to integrate children with special needs in regular classrooms have been shown to positively relate to both academic learning and social relations with classmates (Allington, 1987; Baker, Wang, & Walberg, 1994; Carlsburg & Kavale, 1980; Jenkins, Pious, & Peterson, 1988; Wang & Reynolds, 1995). Contrary to the conventional belief, findings from a recently completed meta-analysis of results from studies on the effects of inclusion on learning published between 1983-1992 indicate that segregation of students with special needs in separate classrooms is actually deleterious to their academic performance and social adjustment, and that special students perform better on average in regular classrooms (Baker et al., 1994). These findings have bolstered the increasing demands by parents and legal experts for schools to address the scientific and legal basis for noninclusive practices (*Oberti v. Clementon*, 1993; *Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission v. School District of Pennsylvania*, 1994) and to explain why so many students are set aside in categorical programs in which they continue to fall behind their peers. Indeed, there are many students who require much better help then they now receive. They tend to have unusual needs (both at the high and low margins of the achievement distribution) and to challenge teachers to the limits of their commitments, insights, and skills.

Clearly we must find ways to reform current practices to ensure that the educational experience in elementary and secondary schools is appropriate, meaningful, and the main source for positive development and education for all students. There is a substantial knowledge base that should be utilized in attempting to improve the current disjointed and unresponsive approach to serving the many children and youth who are not adequately served by the current system. The following are highlights drawn from the recommendations that evolved through discussions at a national invitational conference on *Making a Difference for Students at Risk* (Wang & Reynolds, 1994).[1] A transcending principle that emerged from the recommendations is that public schools should be

[1] This conference was sponsored by the National Center on Education in the Inner Cities, in collaboration with the National Research Center on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning, with funding support from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education. Conference participants included federal, state, and local policymakers, field-based professionals, researchers, and child advocacy and parent representatives.

inclusive and integrated, and that separation by race, gender, language background, ability, or any other characteristics should be minimal and should require a compelling rationale.

- **Make public schools inclusive and integrated.** A "sunset" date is suggested for all legislation affecting categorical programs, as is a date for organizing efforts to develop coherent, broadly framed revisions of federal policies and programs in all domains. It is suggested that these programs should: 1) reduce all forms of "set-asides" or segregation of students; 2) decrease suspensions, expulsions, and dropouts; and 3) place burden-of-proof obligations on those who propose separating a student from the mainstream program.

- **Organize public schools into smaller units--mini-schools, charters or houses--in which groups of students remain together for several years of study.** This reform measure would allow increased use of site-based management; curricular options and choice by students, teachers, and parents; heterogenous and cross-age grouping; and would facilitate the design and implementation of major curriculum and instruction innovations.

- **Step up research on the learning characteristics and needs of students, with particular attention to students with special needs, to provide a growing knowledge base and credible evaluation system.** Research should address strengths, resilience, and other positive factors as well as limitations and deficiencies for *all* children. A case can be made for disaggregating research data for subgroups such as race and gender. This would not imply physical separation of students within the school; it does, however, show how various racial, ethnic, and gender groups are advancing in their learning under various conditions.

- **Implement new approaches based on what is known about teaching in schools with a high concentration of students with special needs.** Here the emphasis is on aggressive teaching, with high learning expectations for all students.

- **Shift the use of labels from students to programs.** Children will be better served if educators use diagnostic procedures emphasizing variables that can be manipulated to improve learning. As an initial step, educators should identify students who need extra help. Most students who are served by the various categorical programs that label them need some individualized education rather than a different kind of education.

- **Expand programs for the most able students.** One of the most neglected areas in urban schools is programs that would nurture the potentials of the most able students. Advances in learning by these students require expert instruction, which is typically only present in areas such as athletics and music. Equally important is to make strenuous efforts to give students from disadvantaged backgrounds opportunities to show their potential for accelerated learning. Once they do, challenging programs should be made available to them with continuing support.

- **Apply concepts of inclusion and integration to the bureaucratic structure of government, professional organizations, and advocacy groups.** If educational programs are to become more coherent and integrated, the public and professional structures that uphold them must pull

together. Federal and state agencies need to become integrated and funding across all categorical programs, as well as monitoring systems, needs to be revised to emphasize teamwork and coordination.

- **Integrate the most current findings in general, remedial, and special education, as well as special language learning areas, into professional development programs of all educational professionals**. For the inclusive forms of education to work, regular teachers and specialist professionals must be equipped with expertise to take on new and/or altered roles. Newly emerging practices, such as mini-schools, that aim to more effectively respond to student diversity, must be incorporated in continuing professional development of the school staff.

- **Create broad cross-agency collaboration for delivering coordinated, comprehensive child and family services**. Various levels and divisions of government agencies often undertake separate, uncoordinated programs aimed to support healthy development and learning of children and families in a variety of disadvantaged circumstances. Implementation of community rebuilding efforts, such as the Empowerment Zones or Enterprise Communities, for example, are rarely linked with "education empowering" efforts. Education must be a key connection to enable children and families to take stock of the benefits of a broad-based community rebuilding effort.

Conclusion and Prospects for the Next Step

Clearly, the present approaches to reducing educational segregation and closing the achievement gap in urban schools are not working acceptably. They do not ensure the kind of accountability intended for achieving equity in educational outcomes of many children and youth from ethnic and language minority backgrounds who live in a variety of adverse circumstances that place them at risk of educational failure. If we are to be prepared to face the challenges posed by the demographic, economic, and technological realities, we must begin to make fundamental changes that focus on the rights of all students to schooling success and take into account how to better serve students who are marginalized in schools.

It seems likely that the coming decade will make the faults in present practice all the more pressing. Along with the projected demographic changes, greater educational productivity will be necessary to be competitive in the global economy. Federal and state education agencies and local schools must be linked with other educational, social, and health service-providing institutions to establish a priority of concern in all aspects of urban services to ensure that children and youth receive the highest quality education possible. A common standard of educational outcomes must be upheld for every student, including those in urban schools with high concentrations of students from ethnic and language minority backgrounds. Access to education is one thing; providing quality education that enables all students to succeed in school is quite another.

Reducing the achievement gap has been a persistent theme of urban school reform. However, the problem of the widespread achievement gap, which could cripple the next generation, is sometimes overshadowed by the litany of problems of daily urban life. Many children from diverse

ethnic and language minority backgrounds have real problems in school that must be acknowledged and dealt with in a realistic fashion. Too often they are placed in educationally segregated situations that contribute to a widening of the achievement gap--they are labeled negatively and then set aside in educationally impoverished and unevaluated programs.

We must proceed now with the task of breaking through the narrowness, disjointedness, and wastefulness of the categorical approach to providing for student diversity. Programs currently serving the large number of minority students, such as Chapter 1 (Title I), special education, and bilingual and migrant education, would profit from rigorous improvement efforts organized around principles of effective practices (e.g., instructional teaming; learner-centered and other pedagogies based on effectiveness research and innovative practices that work; meeting the diverse needs of students through building-based coordination of school services and school coordination with community and other education, social, and family involvement; and an emphasis on developing student self-direction and metacognitive processes in learning).

Based on the twofold purpose of this paper, we proposed a two-part initiative to address the concern of the achievement gap in urban schools: (a) forging greater school connections with families and the community to foster resilience development, and (b) elimination of educational segregation within schools and implementing responsive and instructionally powerful practices to ensure learning success of every student.

The first part of the initiative we propose involves the joining of demonstrably effective practices to establish a coordinated educational and children and family services delivery system that is inclusive in serving the needs of all students better. The second part calls for broad authority at federal, state, and local levels to grant waivers of rules and regulations to schools that wish to provide more integrated forms of education for all students, including those who are unjustifiably segregated in second-system programs. The conditions of waivers include assurance to parents of accountability in terms of student outcomes, and assurance that no financial disincentives are created for schools undertaking such initiatives.

Many worthy ideas and demonstrated practices could be encouraged under our proposed two-part initiatives, including the recommendations suggested in the present paper. The proposed waivers for performance strategy would permit and support the implementation of demonstrably effective practices to scale, while offering assurances about hard-won rights to parents and students as well as removing financial disincentives for responsible changes.

A major next-step task, as we see it, is an aggressive plan to engage the public in dialogue on the kinds of broad-based school reforms that are needed to significantly reduce educational segregation and the achievement gap. ***There is much at stake for all of us.*** It will take much courage to lead the way to new, more coherent, and genuinely useful programs that can make a difference in support of student achievement, and to bring the schools into broader collaborative efforts for community betterment. The policy and reform recommendations advanced in this paper are a call for a better and more systemic approach to delivery of services within and beyond school walls.

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The National Center on Education in the Inner Cities

The National Center on Education in the Inner Cities (CEIC) was established on November 1, 1990 by the Temple University Center for Research in Human Development and Education (CRHDE) in collaboration with the University of Illinois at Chicago and the University of Houston. CEIC is guided by a mission to conduct a program of research and development that seeks to improve the capacity for education in the inner cities.

A major premise of the work of CEIC is that the challenges facing today's children, youth, and families stem from a variety of political and health pressures; their solutions are by nature complex and require long-term programs of study that apply knowledge and expertise from many disciplines and professions. While not forgetting for a moment the risks, complexity, and history of the urban plight, CEIC aims to build on the resilience and "positives" of inner-city life in a program of research and development that takes bold steps to address the question, "What conditions are required to cause massive improvements in the learning and achievement of children and youth in this nation's inner cities?" This question provides the framework for the intersection of various CEIC projects/studies into a coherent program of research and development.

Grounded in theory, research, and practical know-how, the interdisciplinary teams of CEIC researchers engage in studies of exemplary practices as well as primary research that includes longitudinal studies and field-based experiments. CEIC is organized into four programs: three research and development programs and a program for dissemination and utilization. The first research and development program focuses on the *family* as an agent in the education process; the second concentrates on the *school* and factors that foster student resilience and learning success; the third addresses the *community* and its relevance to improving educational outcomes in inner cities. The focus of the *dissemination and utilization* program is not only to ensure that CEIC's findings are known, but also to create a crucible in which the Center's work is shaped by feedback from the field to maximize its usefulness in promoting the educational success of inner-city children, youth, and families.

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